

Frequently Asked Questions from SGIG Metrics and Benefits Webinar - March 5, 2010

Question: What is the deadline for submitting the draft Metrics and Benefits Reporting Plan?

Answer: Draft Metrics and Benefits Reporting Plans are due within 60 days following the date when both parties have signed the grant agreement.¹ DOE will provide comments or approve the draft plan. An approved Metrics and Benefits Reporting Plan is required for projects to go forward. (Note: The Metrics and Benefits Reporting Plan may also have been referred to as the Data Collection and Analysis Plan. These are the same document.)

Question: What data are Recipients required to submit with respect to jobs?

Answer: The Recovery Act requires ARRA Recipients to report the number of created and retained jobs to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the www.FederalReporting.gov website; in addition, DOE requires the reporting of this information to the www.SmartGrid.gov website with some minor, but important, differences.

Jobs reported to the www.FederalReporting.gov website must be expressed as “full-time equivalents” (FTEs), which is calculated as total Recovery Act-funded hours worked divided by the number of hours in a full-time schedule, defined here as 520 hours per calendar quarter. The FTE estimates must be reported for the calendar quarter only for direct jobs created or retained by federal ARRA funds (not the Recipient’s cost-share). Direct jobs relate to labor performed on the project by recipients, sub-recipients (or other partners), and contractors, including efforts associated with the installation of hardware. Recipients should not report on the employment impact on materials and equipment suppliers and central service providers (considered by DOE as “indirect” jobs), except the jobs impact associated with installation efforts. Also, employees who are not directly charged to Recovery Act supported projects/activities, who, nonetheless, provide critical indirect support (e.g., clerical/administrative staff preparing reports, institutional review board staff members, departmental administrators), should not be counted as jobs created or retained.

In addition, DOE requires ARRA SGIG Recipients to report the number of direct jobs created and retained on the www.SmartGrid.gov website. As with the ARRA jobs reporting requirement, the jobs reporting should be expressed as total hours worked on the project each calendar quarter and the same guidance applies regarding how to calculate direct jobs (see preceding paragraph). However, Recipients should report jobs created and retained due to both federal ARRA funds and non-federal cost-shared funds. In addition, the FTEs reported to DOE must be apportioned into broad Department of Labor categories, including: Managers; Engineers; Computer-related Occupations; Environmental and Social Scientists; Construction, Electrical, and Other Trades; Analysts; Business Occupations; Recording, Scheduling, and Computer Operator Occupations. (See Appendix B of the *Guidebook for ARRA Smart Grid Program Metrics and Benefits* dated December 7, 2009 for more information.) Finally, DOE may request data on

¹ For those who received an award signed by the DOE Contracting Officer on December 24, the draft plan was due February 22. Those selectees should communicate with their Technical Project Officers if they have not met this deadline.

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the distribution of resources (e.g., AMI installation vs distribution system deployments) for cross-cutting projects.

Question: What data are Recipients required to submit with respect to monetary investments?

Answer: The Recovery Act requires ARRA Recipients to report monetary investments through invoices. However, DOE also requires Recipients to report monetary investments for the key assets being deployed. This information will be reported quarterly with build metrics through the www.SmartGrid.gov website (which will serve as the interface to the data hub, and is separate from the invoices and cost information that will be provided as part of ARRA reporting).

Question: What is the difference between "Project-level" and "System-level" data?

Answer: "Project-level" data is defined as the build and impact metrics that pertain to the specific scope of the SGIG project including DOE and Recipient cost share funds. This might include the meters that are being replaced as part of an AMI deployment or the distribution feeders that are to be automated using project funds. To the extent possible, DOE will focus on tracking the metrics and benefits as they pertain to the defined scope of the project.

However, some of the impact metrics and benefits will be difficult to measure and calculate directly for the "project" because they are typically only tracked at the "system" level (e.g., emissions reductions). "System-level" data is defined as the full scope of the utility's service territory. For example, this could include distribution feeders that were automated **prior** to the SGIG project. In these cases, DOE would like to track the "system" level impact metrics and benefits to calculate estimates for the "project".

Project-level metrics are a subset of the System. For example, if the SGIG project includes deployment of 100,000 smart meters and a utility had already installed 50,000 smart meters as part of an earlier pilot, the "system" metric would be 150,000 and the "project" metric would be 100,000. In addition, DOE would like to obtain information regarding the build and impact metrics as they pertain to the "system" in order to establish the baseline and track overall US progress toward a smart grid.

Question: What is the difference between the SmartGrid.gov website and the Smart Grid Clearinghouse?

Answer: SmartGrid.gov is the DOE website that will be used to convey the metrics and benefits of the ARRA Smart Grid Program. The Smart Grid Clearinghouse is a separate website that will be managed by the private sector for the purpose of gathering and conveying any information on the advancement and application of smart grid technologies. DOE intends to link the ARRA information from SmartGrid.gov with the Smart Grid Clearinghouse.

Question: What are the logistics for entering metrics and benefits data on the www.SmartGrid.gov website? What software is required for data reporting (e.g., Adobe, MS Excel)? How will the standard forms be adjusted to specific projects? Will the metrics and benefits data hub be set up so each individual member of a Recipient Team can enter their respective data? Will multiple people be able to

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log in using separate user names and passwords and input information data on the same project? Will the manual, PDF-based metrics and benefits data interface be the only option or will an automated data interface (e.g. web service) be developed as well?

Answer: The SmartGrid metrics and benefits data hub will allow both form-based and batch load data reporting. The form-based data entry will use editable PDF documents. These documents can be saved locally, updated off-line, and submitted when completed. Batch loading will accept either CSV or XML documents. Adobe Acrobat (available as a free download for many operating systems) is required to complete the editable PDF forms. There are no particular tools required for the batch formats; the input file format or schema will be defined by the data hub team, but any tool can be used to produce the specified file formats.

Our current approach will be to produce input forms and batch files specific for each project based on the Metrics and Benefits Reporting Plan negotiated with each project team. The metrics and benefits data hub will allow separate user names and passwords for each registered user. Projects will be able to designate what users are authorized to input data for that project.

Question: Will DOE allow the regional PSC/PUCs access to the data?

Answer: Any person will be able to access the www.SmartGrid.gov website and view Build Metrics as a whole or at the recipient level. With respect to Impact Metrics, DOE does not plan to make public any information marked "Commercially Valuable Smart Grid Data" provided by recipients, except in aggregated form. DOE does not intend to share project-specific information with regional PSC/PUCs, other than what is made public. It is expected that recipients will use standard practices and mechanisms to communicate project related data with their respective PSC/PUC. Please see the FAQ guidance entitled, "Commercially Valuable Smart Grid Data" issued February 4, 2010 for additional information (which is reproduced below).

From the February 4, 2010 FAQ on Commercially Valuable Smart Grid Data:

Question: What is the Department of Energy's (DOE's) approach for ensuring confidentiality of information that contains confidential and/or proprietary information that recipients are required to submit in carrying out their Metrics and Benefits Reporting Plan obligations?

Answer: DOE does not anticipate requiring delivery of any "proprietary" information, i.e., confidential information developed at private expense outside the DOE grant. For data developed under a SGIG grant, DOE has the right to obtain and publish such data. However, certain "commercially valuable data" as set forth in more detail below, may be protected from publication.

DOE intends to gather and make available to the public information developed under these grants, as defined within the *Guidebook for Reporting ARRA Smart Grid Program Metrics and Benefits*, dated December 7, 2009. This information includes build metrics, impact metrics, and raw data sets, and it will be posted on the Smartgrid.gov website.

Build metrics, e.g., those associated with the deployment and costs of smart grid technologies, will be made available in aggregated and unaggregated form. The names of grant recipients will be associated with the build metrics.

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Impact metrics relate to the performance of grid operations, e.g., improvements in operations and maintenance costs due to the deployment of smart grid technology. They may also relate to deferment of asset purchases due to efficiency improvements. DOE recognizes that impact metric information may be considered confidential by the grant recipient. Where this is true, DOE is requesting that grant recipients mark such data as being "commercially valuable smart grid data"(CVD), and submit it to National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Golden, CO, and not to DOE. DOE will make impact metric information available only in aggregated form; DOE does not plan to publish company-specific impact metric information and, if properly asserted and marked as CVD, and delivered to NREL, it would not be subject to release under DOE's FOIA regulations.

Some grant recipients plan to undertake rigorous consumer behavior studies. Raw data produced from these studies will also be made available on the Smartgrid.gov website; however, DOE requests that all personally identifiable information be removed by the grant recipient before providing it to DOE. DOE also plans to write a report based on the results of these studies and the report might identify the names of grant recipients.

DOE will provide the grant recipients detailed information regarding how any of the above information should be marked and submitted. In addition, DOE intends to use the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), located in Golden, Colorado, as its host site for the collection of this information.